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BOUND BY HAYDAY.

To Sir G. Henry Freeling Bart. with
Mr. Atterson's kind regards
Nov. 1839

❧ Kyng Roberd of Cysylle

Imprinted at London

M.DCCC.xxxix.

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PRINTED BY CHARLES WHITTINGHAM
1839

The following little Poem is transcribed from a manuscript volume in the Harleian collection, numbered "Plutarch, 1701," containing several other early poems of a different character, apparently written in the early part of the fifteenth century. The work had been analysed by Warton and Ellis; the former of whom has given a very considerable extract from a MS. (Vernon) in the Bodleian Library, at Oxford; but the latter has used the same original as this. Other manuscripts of the same romance are also to be found in the Public Library at Cambridge, and in the Library of Caius College, in that University. There appear to be trivial discrepancies in these several copies,*

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* In the fly-leaf of this volume is this note, written in an ancient hand, and now almost obliterated, "This booke was written in Anno Domini, 1303."

notwithstanding the incidents generally agree, and the phraseology is not materially different. Robert of Sicily has never before been printed, although the late Mr. Weber had made a transcript of it with that view.

The story appears to be founded on that of the Emperor Jovinian, the twenty-third in the late valuable publication of the English Gesta Romanorum, by the Roxburghe Club, and is so stated by the learned editor of that work. This tale is alluded to by Chaucer, in v. 7511.

A resemblance has also been remarked between Robert of Sicily and the Story of Syr Gowghter, reprinted in a collection of Early Popular Poetry, published in 1817; *and it has also been likened to the romance of Robert the Devil. The miracle play of that name was printed at Rouen in* 1836, *from a MS. of the fourteenth century in the Royal Library at Paris; and in the following year, a romance poem with a similar title was published from a MS. of the thirteenth century, in the same rich collection. In the preface to this latter work, this similarity has been remarked by its editor, M. Trebutien, who says, "Le Roman du roi Robert de Sicile, paroît offrir quelques rapports avec les aventures du Herós Normand."*

These coincidences, however, are not very strong, and are altogether denied by Mr. Payne Collier, who says, "Both Warton and his late editor speak of the connexion between the romances of Robert of Sicily and Robert the Devil, but they have in fact no resemblance either in character or incidents." History of the Stage, i. 116. *I learn from the same authority that a play, founded on this story, and with a similar title, was performed at Chester in* 1529.

KYNG ROBERD OF CYSYLLE.

PRYNCES proude that beth yn pres
I wol zow telle of thyng no les
In Cysylle was a noble kyng
Fayre and stronge and sumdele zung
He hadde a brother yn grete Rome
Pope oueral crystyndome
Another brother yn Almayne
Emperoure whom Sarysyns wroughte payne
The kyng was hote kyng Roberd
Neuer man wyste hym a ferd
He was kyng of grete honoure
And yclepyd he was conqueroure
In alle the worlde ne was hys pere
For to acounte fer ne nere
And for he was of chyualry floure
Hys brother was made emperoure

Hys other brother Goddys vykere
Pope of Rome as y seyde ere
The pope hyghte pope Vrban
He loued bothe God and man
The emperour hyghte Cyre Valemownde
A strengur werryour was never none founde
He sente aftyr hys brother of Cysyle
Of whom y shal zow telle awhyle
The kyng thoghte he hadde no pere
In alle the worlde fer ne nere
In that thoghte he hadde pryde
For he was nom pere yn eche cyde
And yn a nyzt of seynt Jone
The kyng come to the cherche anone
For to here hys euynsong
He thoghte hys dwellyng ther ful long
He thoghte more on worldly onoure
Than on Criste oure sauyoure
In magnificat he herde a vers
He made a clerk hyt hym reherce
In langage of hys owne tunge
For he wyste nat what they songe
The vers was thys y telle the
Deposuit potentes de sede

Et exaltauit humiles
Thys was the vers wythoutyn les
The clerk seyd a none ryzt
Sere whych ys Goddys myzt
That he may make hyghe lowe
And the lowe hyghe yn lytyl throwe
He may do wyth oute lye
Hys wylle yn twynklyng of an ye
¶ The kyng seyd wyth thought vnstable
Thys song ys fals and fable
What man hath swyche powere
To brynge me lowe yn daungere
I am floure of chyualrye
Myn enmyys y may destroye
Ther ys no man that lyueth yn londe
That may azen me wythstonde
Than ys thys a songe of nought
Thys errour he hadde yn hys thozt
And yn hys thoght a slepe hym toke
In hys pulpyt so seyth the boke
Whan the euynsong was alle done
A kyng hym lyke oute gan gone
And alle men wyth hym ganne wynde
ȝ Kyng Roberd lefte of mynde

The newe kyng was Y the telle
Goddys aungel hys pryde to felle
The aungel yn halle ioye made
And alle men of hym were glade
The kyng a woke that lay yn cherche
Hys men he thoughte wo to werche
For he was lefte there a lone
And derk nyzt hym felle vp one
He gan crye aftyr hys men
But ther was none that spak azen
Saue the sexteyn at the nende
Oute of the cherche to hym gan wende
And sayde what doste thou here
Thou fals thefe thou losengere
Thou art here wyth felonye
Holy cherche to robbery
He seyde foule gadlyng
Y am no thefe Y am a kyng
Opene the cherche dore a none
That Y mowe to my palys gone
The sexteyn thoghte anone wyth than
That he hadde be sum wode man
And opened the cherche dore in haste
The kyng began to ren faste

As a man that was wode
And at his palys gate stode
And clepyd the porter gadelyng
And badde hym come yn hyghyng
A none the gates vp to do
The porter sey he clepeth so
He answered ryzt a none
Thou shalt wete ar we gone
Thy lorde Y am thou shalt hyt knowe
In prisoun thou shalt lyyge lowe
And be hanged and to drawe
As a traytur be the lawe
Thou shalt wetyn Y am kyng
Opene the gatys gadelyng
The porter seyd so mote Y the
The kyng ys now wyth hys meyne
Wel Y wote wythoutyn doute
The kyng ys not now wyth oute
The porter went yn to halle
Before the aungel on kne gan falle
And seyd ther ys at the gate
A nyce fole ycome late
He seyth he ys lorde and kyng
And clepeth me foule gadelyng

Lorde what wylle ze that Y do
Late hym ynne or late hym go
The aungel seyde yn haste
Do hym come yn swythe faste
For my fole Y wyl hym make
Tyl he the name of kyng forsake
The porter come to the gate
And hym cleped yn to late
He smote the porter whan he cam ynne
The blode haste oute of mouthe and chynne
The porter and hys men yn haste
Kyng Roberd yn a podel kaste
Vnsemely was hys body than
That was lyke none other man
They broughte hym before the newe kyng
And seyd lorde thys gadelyng
Me hath smetyn wythoutyn desert
And seyth he ys oure kyng apert
To me he seyth none outher worde
But that he ys bothe kyng and lorde
The treytur myzte for hys sawe
Beyn yhanged and to drawe
The aungel seyd to Kyng Roberd
Thou art a fole thou art not a ferd

My men to do swyche vylonye
Thy gylte thou maste nedes abye
What art thou seyd the aungel
Seyd Roberd thou shalt wyte wel
I am kyng and kyng wol be
Wyth wronge thou hast my dygnyte
The pope of Rome is my brother
And the emperour of Almeyn myn other
They wylle me wreke Y ye telle
Y wote they wyl not longe dwelle
Thou art my fole seyd the aungel
Thou shalt be shore euery del
Lyke a fole a fole to be
For thou hast now no dygnyte
Thyn counseyloure shal be an ape
And o clothyng zow shal be shape
I shal hym clothyn as thy brother
Of o clothyng hyt ys none other
He shal beyn thyn owne fere
Sum wytte of hym thou myzt lere
Houndes how so hyt befalle
Shul ete wyth the yn the halle
Thou shalt etyn on the grounde
Thy sayour shal beyn an hounde

To a saye thy mete before the
For thou haste lore thy dygnyte
He clepyd a barbur hym before
That as a fole shulde he be shore
Alle a rounde lyke a frere
An hondbrede aboue the ere
And on hys crowne makyn a croys
He gan crye and make noys
And seyd they shulde alle abye
That hym ded swyche vylonye
And euer he seyd he was lorde
And eche man skorned hym for hys worde
And eche man seyd he was wode
That preuyd wel he coude no gode
For he wend yn no wyse
That God coude devyse
Hym to brynge to logher state
Wyth a draght he was chek mate
Ther was yn courte grome ne page
That of the kyng ne made grete rage
For no man shulde hym knowe
He was dysfygured yn a throwe
To eche man he was vndyrlyng
Alas here was a delful thyng

That he shulde for hys pryde
Swych hap amonge hys men betyde
For hys grete vnbuxumnesse
God put hym yn other lykenesse
Hungur and thryste he hadde grete
For he muste ete no mete
But houndys etyn of hys dyshe
Were hyt flesshe were hyt fysshe
He was to deth ny broghte
For hungyr or he wulde ete oghte
Wyth houndys that were yn halle
How myzte hym hardere befalle
Whan hyt wulde none other be
He ate wyth houndes grete plente
Wyth houndes euery nyzt he lay
And oft he cryed welawey
That he euer was bore
For he was a man forlore
The aungel asked euery day
Foole art thou king thou me say
Ze he seyde hyt shal be knowe
Y am kyng though Y be lowe
Thou art my foole seyd the aungel
Thou art a fole and that ys del

The aungel was kyng hym thozte longe
In hys tyme was neuer done wronge
Trecherye falshede ne no gyle
Don yn the londe of Cysyle
Alle gode ther was grete plente
Amonge men loue and charyte
Euery man loued wel other
Bettyr loue was neuer wyth brother
In hys tyme was neuer no stryfe
Betwene man and hys wyfe
Than was thys a joyful thyng
In londe to haue swyche a kyng
Kyng he was thre zere and more
Roberd zede as fole forlore
¶ Sethe hyt fel vpp on a day
A lytyl before the moneth of may
Syre Valemounde the Emperoure
Sente letters of grete honoure
To hys brother of Cysyle kyng
And bad hym come wyth oute lettyng
That they myghte bothe yn come
Wyth here brother the pope of Rome
Hym thought longe they were atwynne
He badde hym lette for no wynne

That he were of gode aray
In Rome an holy thursday.
The aungel welcomed the messangers
And zaue hem clothes ryche of pererys
Furryd alle wyth ermyne
In alle crystyndome were none so fyne
And alle were couched with perye
Was neuer better wyth oute lye
Of that wundred alle the londe
How that clothe was wrought wyth honde
For zyf swyche clothe were to dyghte
Alle crystendom make hyt ne myghte
Where swyche clothe were to selle
Ne who yt made coude no man telle
The messangers wente wyth the kyng.
To grete Rome wyth oute lettyng
The foole Robard also wente
Clothed yn lothely garnement
Wyth fox tayles ryuen alle aboute
Men myzte hym knowyn yn the route
An ape rode of hys clothyng
So foule rode neuer kyng
The aungel rode alle yn whyte
Was neuer founde swyche amyzte

Alle was whyte atyre and stede
The stede was feyre there he zede
So fayre a stede as he on rode
Was neuer kyng that euer bestrode
And so was alle hys aparayle
Alle men hadde therof meruayle
Hys men weryn alle rychely dyzte
Here rychesse can sey no wyzte
Of clothes gerdelys and outher thyng
Euery squyer thoght a kyng
And alle were of ryche aray
But kyng Roberd Y zow say
Alle men on hym gan pyke
For he rode other vnlyke
The pope and the emperoure also
And other lordys many mo
Welcomed the aungel for kyng
And made joye for hys comyng
So ryal kyng come neuer in Rome
Also men wondred whan he come
Thes thre brethryn madym comforte
The aungel was made brother be sorte
Wel was Pope and Emperoure
That hadde a brother of swyche onowre

Forthe com sterte kyng Robard
As a fole nought aferd
And cryed wyth ful egur speche
To hys brethryn to done hym wreche
On hym that hadde wyth queynte gyle
Hys crowne and londe of Cysyle
Pope emperoure no none other
Knew nat the fole for here brother
Moche fole than was he holde
More than er a thousend folde
To cleyme swych a brotherhede
Hyt was holde a fole dede
Kyng Roberd gan to makyn care
More than he ded euer are
When hys brethyryn ne wulde hym knowe
Alas he seyd now Y am lowe
For he hoped for any thyng
His brethryn wulde ha made hym kyng
And whan hys hope was alle go
Allas he seyd and wellawe
Alas he seyde that Y was born
For now I am man forlorn
Alas he seyde that Y was made
For of my lyfe Y am alle sadde

Alas he seyde Y am on lyue
Sorwen thou art me ful ryue
Alas he seyd and welawe
Herte breste and clefe on two
Alas Alas was alle hys song
Hys here he tere hys handys he wrong
And euer he seyd alas allas
And than he thoghte on hys trespas
¶ He thought on Nabugodonosor
A noble kyng was hym before
In alle the worlde ne was hys pere
For to a counte fer no nere
Wyth hym was syre Olyuerne
Prynce of knyztes stoute and sterne
Olyuerne swore euer mor
By god Nabugodonosor
And seyde ther was no God yn londe
But Nabugodonosor Y vndyrstonde
Therfor Nabugodonosor was glad
That he the name of god had
And loued Olyuerne moche the more
But seth hyt greued hem bothe sore
Olyuerne deyde In doloure
He was slawe yn sharpe showre

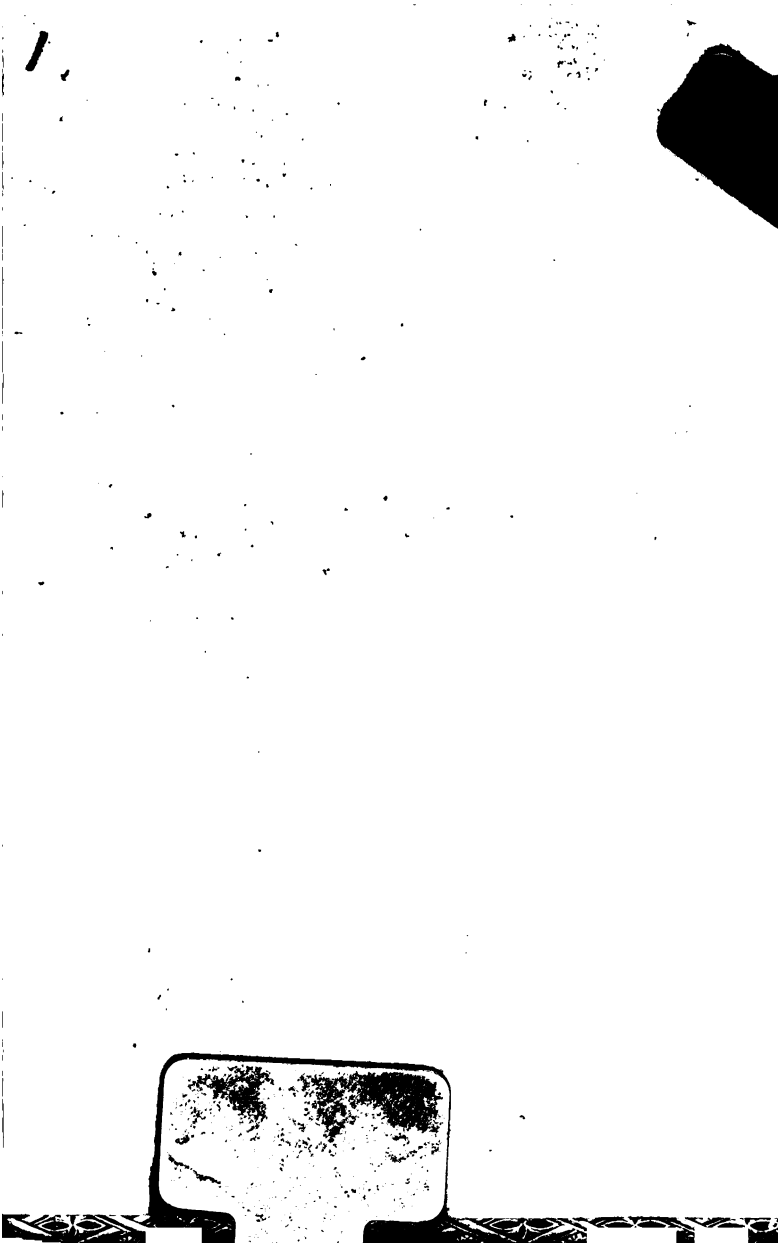
Nabugodonosor was yn desert
Durst he nowhere ben apert
Fyftene zere he lyued there
Wyth rotys gras and euylfare
And alle of mos hys clothys was
And alle hyt come by Goddys gras
He cryed mercy wyth sory there
God hym restored as he was ere
Now am Y yn swych a cas
And welworse than he was
Whan God zaue me swyche honoure
That Y was cleped conqueroure
In euery londe of Crystendome
Folke speke of me wel yn lome
And seydyn nowhere was my pere
In alle the worlde fer no nere
For that name Y hadde pryde
As aungelys gun from heuene glyde
And yn twynklyng of an ye
God fornom hem here maystrye
So hath he me myn for my gulte
Now am Y ful lowe pulte
And that ys ryzt that Y so be
Lorde on thy fole thou haue pyte

That errur hath made me to smerte
That Y hadde yn my herte
Lorde Y lened not on the
Lorde on thy foole thou haue pyte
Holy wrytte Y hadde yn despyte
Therfore renyd ys myn delyte
Therfore ys ryzt a fole that Y be
Lorde on thy fole thou haue pyte
Lorde Y haue gulte the sore
Mercy Lorde I wyl no more
Euer thy foole Lorde wyl I be
Lorde on thy foole then haue pyte
Lorde thou haste me boghte.and wroghte
And zyt or now y knewe hyt nogte
Than ys ryzt a fole that y be
Lorde on thy foole then haue pyte
Of my kyngedome greueth me noght
Hyt ys for gulte wyth dede and thoghte
At bettyr state kepe Y none be
Lorde on thy fole thou haue pyte
¶ Blyssful Marye thou were yn core
To helpe man that was forlore
Prey thy sone that deyde for me
On hys fole he haue pytye

Blyssful Marye to the Y crye
Thou art ful of curtesye
Prey thy sone that deyde for me
On hys fole he haue pytye
Blyssful Marye ful of grace
To the Y knowlyche my trespace
Prey thy sone that deyde for me
On hys fole he haue pyte
He seyde no more alas alas
But thanked God of hys grace
And thus he gan hymself stylle
And thanked God wyth gode wylle
The Pope the Emperoure and the Kyng
Fyue wekys madyn here dwellyng
Whan the fyue wekys were alle gone
To here owne londe they wolden a none
Bothe the Emperoure and the Kynge
Ther was a fayre departyng
The aungel come to Cysyle
He and hys men yn a whyle
Whan he come yn to halle
The fole he ded furthe calle
And seyde fole art thou kyng
Nay syre he seyde wyth oute lesyng

What art thou seyde the aungel
Syre a fole he seyde Y wote welle
And more than a fole zyf hyt may be
Kepe Y none of dygnyte
The aungel yn to chaumbre went
Aftyr the fole a none he sente
He badde hys men out of chambre gon
There lefte no mo but he alone
And the fole that stode hym by
To hym he seyde thou hast mercy
God hath forzyue the thy mysdede
And here aftyr thou hym drede
Thenk thou were lowe pulte
And alle was for thyn owne gulte
The loweste state that may be
Ys a fole how thenketh the
A foole thou were to heuene kyng
Therfore thou were vndyrlyng
I am an aungel of renoun
Sent to kepe thy Regyoun
More ioye me shal falle
In heuene a monge myn feryn alle
In an oure of a day
Than here Y the say

In an hundred thousand zere
They alle the worlde fer and nere
Were myn at my lykyng
Y am an aungel thou art kyng
He wente yn twynklyng of an yze
No more of hym they seye
Kyng Robard come yn to halle
Hys men he hadde furthe calle
Alle they were at hys wylle
As to here lorde and that was skylle
He loued wel God and holy cherche
And euer thoughte wel to werche
He regned aftyr thre zere and more
And loued God and alle his lore
The aungel zaue hym yn warnyng
Of the tyme of hys deyyng
Whan tyme come to deye sone
He lete wryte sone anone
How God wyth hys mochyl myzt
Made hym lowe and that was ryzt
Thys storye he sente euerydele
To hys brethryn vndyr hys sele
Whan tyme come he shulde deye
That tyme he deyde sothe to seye

Hys brethryn thoghtyn on the fole
That cryde to hem and made dole
And wystyn wel hyt was here brother
Wyth oute doute hyt was none other
In Cysyle wyste hyt many mo
That weryn wyth hym whan hyt was so
The Pope of Rome berof gan preche
Alle crystyn men therof to teche
That they shulde pryde forsake
And gode vertues to hem take
And seyde hys brother that was kyng
How he for pryde was vndyrlyng
For pryde wulde zyf hyt myzt ha be
Surmounte Crystys dygnyte
And ben alle at hys owne wylle
Thus thurough pryde man may spylle
Thys storye ys wythoutyn lye
At Rome wrytyn In memorye
At seynt Petyr cherche wel Y knowe
That thus ys Crystys myzt Ysowe
That lowe shul hyeze at Goddys wylle
And heyze shul lowe.....thoght hyt be ylle
Cryste that for vs wuldest deye
In thy kyngdome lete vs be hye

Euer more to ben a boue
Where ys bothe pes and loue
God graunte that hyt so be
Amen. Amen. per charyte.